

# **BOROUGH OF HASBROUCK HEIGHTS**

## **MINUTES**

**March 11, 2003**

A Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hasbrouck Heights was held on March 11, 2003 at 8 p.m. at the Masonic Hall, 200 Division Avenue, corner of the Boulevard, Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey.

Mayor Torre began the meeting and stated that the meeting complied with the Sunshine Law, due notice having been made to all members by personal service on January 1, 2003 and to The Observer, The Record and the Herald News on January 1, 2003.

**ROLL CALL:** Present: Mayor William J. Torre, Councilman Andrew Link III, Councilman Herbert D. Heeren, Councilman Justin A. DiPisa, Councilman Garrett R. Pepe, Councilwoman Marlene Verrastro (arrived late)

Absent: Councilman John Wassberg

**SALUTE TO THE FLAG AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Mayor Torre led in the Salute to the Flag and Pledge of Allegiance.

### **COMMUNICATIONS:**

Letter from William Ziemkiewicz, of Mac Arthur Avenue regarding the problem of commuter parking, a request for "No Parking 6 to 9 a.m.," and excessive speeding of vehicles on this street.

Letter from Captain Uwe Malakas, chairperson of Bergen County TRIAD regarding a Community Policing group composed of Bergen's seniors and law enforcement inviting this community to join.

Invitation from the Contemporary Club to their 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Concert on April 27 at 2 p.m. in the Jr/Sr High School Kiefer Auditorium.

The first two items of correspondence were referred to the Police Department.

On a motion to waive the reading of any of the items of correspondence was made by Councilman DiPisa, seconded by Councilman Pepe, and unanimously carried, the foregoing Correspondence was accepted.

**PETITIONS:** None

**MINUTES:** (January 21, 2003, January 28, 2003)

On a motion by Councilman Pepe, seconded by Councilman Heeren, and unanimously carried, the foregoing Minutes were approved.

**BILLS:**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the claims and accounts amounting to \$1,677,761.55 specified in the schedule hereto annexed, having been examined and approved by the Finance Commissioner, or his Deputy, be paid and that warrants be issued therefor.

Signed Herbert D. Heeren  
Commissioner of Finance

On a motion by Councilman DiPisa, seconded by Councilman Pepe, and unanimously carried, the foregoing Resolution was approved.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** 41. Authorizing Tonnage Grant Application for 2002  
Raffle License for Corpus Christi Rosary Society  
Authorizing Borough Clerk to Advertise for Bids for Radio  
Maintenance

On a motion by Councilwoman Link, seconded by Councilman Pepe, and unanimously carried, the foregoing Resolutions was approved (Copies attached).

**RESOLUTIONS:** 44. Dog License - Payment of Fees to State  
45. Authorizing Redemption of Tax Sale Certificate #2001-01  
46. Opposing Charter Airplane Service Out of Teterboro  
47. Encouraging State Legislators to Introduce Funding to  
48. Endorsing Hands Free Cell Phone Usage  
49. Payroll

**RESOLUTIONS (cont'd):**

50. Authorizing Introduction of 2003 Budget (this was read separately later in the meeting)
51. Awarding Contract for Ottawa Avenue Sewer
52. 2002 Budget Appropriation Reserves Transfers

Regarding Resolution No. 48 - this is in support of state legislation. It was recommended to encourage legislation at the municipal level as well.

On a motion by Councilman Link, seconded by Councilman DiPisa, and unanimously carried, the foregoing Resolutions were approved (copies attached).

50. Authorizing Introduction of 2003 Budget

On a motion by Councilman Heeren, seconded by Councilman Link, and unanimously carried, the foregoing Resolution was approved (copies attached).

**MAYOR'S BUDGET MESSAGE:**

The Mayor made the following comments regarding the introduction of the 2003 budget. He said this is essentially a preliminary budget gone over by the Finance Committee with total appropriations of \$12,575,679.20 and the amount to be raised for Municipal Purposes \$9,089,671. Public hearing is scheduled April 8, 2003 at 8 p.m. in this Masonic Lodge. The 2003 Municipal Rate as introduced is \$1.041 per \$100 of Assessed Valuation which represents an initial budget of 8 points over the 2002 local rate. Total projected tax rate is not possible at this time because of the uncertainty of the school and county budget. He continued this is very difficult this year as there are a number of issues that require special consideration and that the level of services provided to all residents is maintained at the current level. Namely they are health insurance costs increase 20-22%, approximately \$160,000, almost 2 points. This year the budget again includes an appropriation for LOSAP for the volunteer Fire Department in the amount of \$55,000. Sewer maintenance which includes patching holes in lines to prevent infiltration of water, seeking out homeowners who attach their sump pumps into the sewer, and sewer fees have increased by approximately \$40,000 this year. A line item for payment of Bond Anticipation Notes has remained constant at \$285,000, with the current interest rate at 1.26%. He continued that as a service provider, a large portion is salaries and increases in salaries estimated at approximately \$200,000, with \$140,000 for police and remainder for DPW and miscellaneous salaries, with a loss of \$125,000 in revenues from a Cops in Schools

**MAYOR'S BUDGET MESSAGE (cont'd):**

grant that expired in 2002 that had helped to offset police salaries. Costs associated with liability and workmen's compensation insurance increased by \$15,000. Interest rates have declined. Over the past nine years the budget increased under 2.5% per year. Efforts to continue to reduce the budget will be made.

**APPOINTMENTS:** None

**RESIGNATIONS:** None

**ORDINANCE (S) ON INTRODUCTION:**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2004:**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that an ordinance entitled **"AN ORDINANCE TO STABILIZE AND REGULATE RENTS WITHIN THE BOROUGH OF HASBROUCK HEIGHTS AND TO ESTABLISH A RENT BOARD, WHICH ORDINANCE IS TO BE COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE "2003" RENT LEVELING ORDINANCE"** was introduced this date be and the same is hereby passed on first reading and the Borough Clerk be directed to advertise notice of public hearing on said Ordinance to be held at the regular meeting of the Borough Council on April 8, 2003.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2005:**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that an ordinance entitled **"2003 "CAP" ORDINANCE TO EXCEED INDEX RATE; INDEX RATE LESS THAN 5% LIMITATION FOR THE YEAR 2003 (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14)"** was introduced this date be and the same is hereby passed on first reading and the Borough Clerk be directed to advertise notice of public hearing on said Ordinance to be held at the regular meeting of the Borough Council on March 25, 2003.

On a motion by Councilman Link, seconded by Councilman Heeren, and unanimously carried, the foregoing Ordinances on Introduction were approved.

**ORDINANCE(S) ON CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING:**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2001:**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that an Ordinance entitled: **"AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND SUPPLEMENT A NEW CHAPTER ENTITLED CHAPTER 25 ENTITLED "ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION" OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF HASBROUCK HEIGHTS"** was continued on public hearing until March 25, 2003.

**ORDINANCE(S) ON PUBLIC HEARING:**

Mayor Torre opened up the meeting to the public on Ordinance No. 1971, Ordinance No. 1972 and Ordinance No. 2003.

Ann McGill, 139 Field Avenue, regarding Ordinance No. 1971, asked what kind of entertainment and was told this ordinance extends the licensing obligation to include independent contractors such as it was learned existed through a past application.

**ORDINANCE NO. 1971:**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that an Ordinance entitled **““AN ORDINANCE SUPPLEMENTING THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF HASBROUCK HEIGHTS SO AS TO INCLUDE THEREIN A NEW CHAPTER ENTITLED “CHAPTER 128, ENTERTAINMENT, PUBLIC,” WHICH REQUIRES THE ISSUANCE OF A LICENSE FOR THE PROVISION OF CERTAIN FORMS OF ENTERTAINMENT, WHICH SETS FORTH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCH LICENSE AND WHICH PROVIDES FOR THE IMPOSITION OF A FEE FOR THE SAME”** be now passed on second and final reading and the Borough Clerk be and is hereby authorized and directed to publish said Ordinance, same to be published in The Observer, a newspaper circulating and published in the Borough of Hasbrouck Heights.

**ORDINANCE NO. 1972:**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that an Ordinance entitled **“AN ORDINANCE TO SUPPLEMENT CHAPTER 133 ENTITLED “FEES” OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF HASBROUCK HEIGHTS SO AS TO INCLUDE THEREIN A NEW SECTION TO PROVIDE FOR THE FEES TO BE CHARGED IN CONNECTION WITH THE LICENSING OF CERTAIN PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 128 OF THE CODE”** be now passed on second and final reading and the Borough Clerk be and is hereby authorized and directed to publish said Ordinance, same to be published in The Observer, a newspaper circulating and published in the Borough of Hasbrouck Heights.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2003:**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that an Ordinance entitled **“AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND SUPPLEMENT CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE I ENTITLED “WOODLAND PARK” OF CHAPTER 194 ENTITLED “PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS” OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF HASBROUCK HEIGHTS”** be now passed on second and final reading and the Borough Clerk be and is hereby authorized and directed to publish said Ordinance, same to be published in The Observer, a newspaper circulating and published in the Borough of Hasbrouck Heights.

**MISCELLANEOUS FROM PUBLIC:**

Mayor Torre opened the meeting up to the public as per the Open Public Meetings Act legislation which was signed into law recently which requires that there be an opportunity for public comment at every public meeting.

Ron Burrows, Richard Schultz and John Soderman, Progressive Brick Company. Mr. Burrows, as spokesperson, said that in an interview they were asked to give to a reporter of The Record and the recent article that appeared in that paper and by obtaining a copy of the master plan, they learned the borough's master plan was proposing that Progressive might fit state criteria for redevelopment. They were baffled as to the contents and were appearing to get facts, noting their long history and community service to the Borough. It was explained that the planner had listed this property as one that could be considered by the Planning Board for redevelopment, but that before any action is taken, a host of procedures, including direction from the council, is needed. The master plan has not been approved as yet. No action has been taken. Mr. Burrows was advised to continue to do what they are doing.

Ann McGill, in support of Progressive said they were good neighbors, a vibrant business, no problem, had been there 56 years, asking what would be put there in its place. She was advised there has been no formal action taken.

Ron Burrows, in closing said they do try to work with the town both commercially and residentially. Mayor Torre noted that the bricks for the new Municipal Complex and Veterans Walkway were purchased from Progressive. Mr. Burrows asked that the council think twice before considering this. The borough attorney explained the detailed process of a master plan and re-examination. Council members reassured him that they want to work with businesses.

John Soderman, Paramus, formerly of Lawrence Avenue, said they were quite worried, and questioned the master plan. He was told that the report is broad, and that the Planning Board doesn't initiate redevelopment. The planner made recommendations to the board of areas the board or council could consider. No action has been taken.

Robert Searle, 51 Henry Street, a member of the Planning Board, suggested they attend the meeting of the Planning Board.

Carol Skiba, 191 Field Avenue, regarding Resolution No. 46, that Governor Pataki of New York be given a copy. She also said Progressive was a good neighbor and that there are a lot of other areas of Route 17 that need renovation.

George Shihanian, 59 Garrison Ave, was concerned that police salaries have been mentioned several times as the reason for the higher budget. He questioned that the police contract was up in 2002, and now in negotiations. How come other borough employees received higher percentages for raises. The police department was commended on a fine job, and the real issues are with new hires of the police

**MISCELLANEOUS FROM PUBLIC (cont'd):**

department for the future. All departments are being squeezed and plans for the future are being considered. Mr. Shihanian questioned why it was noted when it was only one percentage point, that how much is it costing in attorneys fees. He was told that the increase collectively is very large. The other employees getting some percentage raises are non-union, are at a disadvantage, where they sometimes didn't get any raises, or salaries are inadequate. Some increases are merit or equalization increases. He was asked to put his request about salaries in writing and submit it to the Administrator.

Ann McGill, questioned how many town employees there were. She was told about 90-95 full time, and it went up to 120 if you counted the seasonal employees. She suggested taking out \$10 per employee per month to pay for health benefits. She was told the departments with contracts, with unions, and the State of New Jersey, under which the borough has its health benefits, does not warrant this, and also that public employees are paid less than private sector, therefore the benefits are better.

Robert Searle, commended the mayor and council on acting very responsibly in a lot of matters over the years and have a difficult task. As a member of the Planning Board he understood what they are faced with and that suggestions should be made after all the information is divested.

**RECESS FOR CAUCUS:**

Mayor Torre announced that the meeting would be recessed for Caucus.

**ADJOURN:**

There being no further business to be conducted by the Mayor and Council, the meeting was adjourned.

I, ROSE MARIE SEES, Borough Clerk of the Borough of Hasbrouck Heights, do hereby certify that the foregoing Minutes are to the best of my knowledge a true account of the Mayor and Council Meeting held on March 11, 2003.

Rose Marie Sees, RMC  
Borough Clerk